

# CATS



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The Official Journal of the Capital Area Timex/Sinclair Users Group

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## **Presidential Ramblings**

Regretfully, I must announce Vernon Smith's resignation as Newsletter Editor. He details his reasons elsewhere in this issue and is also offering future help with the actual publishing of this organ. His years of producing an outstanding publication have brought accolades not only from our members, but from Editors of other UG Newsletters as well. We can understand his decision, however, so accept it with sincere gratitude for the devotion he has shown us.

Proof of the viability of CATS I now balance the "bad" news with the announcement that Tim Swenson immediately accepted my suggestion that he assume the Editor's role. His June marriage and subsequent honeymoon will, of necessity, cause a delay in getting the NL into a regular schedule of publication [ I'll try to get the July issue done ahead of time - ED ], but his enthusiasm in accepting the responsibility bodes well for the future. I just hope the new Mrs. Swenson is as pleased as I am!

Our Constitution calls for the slate of officers to be published in the June NL, so I am including it here to assure it is known prior to June's election. The following slate is reported by Ted Osheroff and Mannie Quintero:

President : Ruth Fegley  
1st V. P. : Hank Dickson  
2nd V. P. : Tom Robbins  
Rec Sec'y : Audrey Curnutt  
Corr Sec'y: Joe Miller  
Treasurer : Barry Washington

Perhaps the best way for me to use the rest of this column is to bring you on board as to information we have neglected to share earlier or may not be included elsewhere, with no particular ranking of importance.

(1) You may have wondered at the "last Issue" item on the mailing label. It is normally calculated to assure your receipt of 12 issues for a year's membership. (If you joined in January and recieved the current NL your label would read "last issue:12-90".) However, our decision this past January to reduce dues to \$15 was not communicated timely, so rather than sending refunds, we extended your membership by 2 months.

(2) Our membership has shrunk to 70, however, meeting attendance averages close to 25 of the approximate 50 members who live within driving distance. Close to half of these live as far away as Harrisburg, Wilmington & Baltimore suburbs; as well as Northern Virginia. And we still attract the occasional new member.

(3) Although Bill Jones is relinquishing his able leadership of UPDATE, the lone Sinclair magazine, after the July issue the reins will be taken over by Frank Davis with Wife Carol. Hopefully the subscribers will remain loyal. Your \$18 check rewards you with quarterly issues jammed full of data not available elsewhere. Send

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it to:  
UPDATE Computer Systems  
P.O. Box 1095  
Peru, IN 46970

(4) I'm going to Milwaukee and will have a report for you at the June meeting.

## From The Editor:

Well, it looks like Vernon has decided to pass the torch on the another newsletter editor. I know that he has put a lot of effort into the newsletter making it the visually striking publication that it is. I know we would all like to thank Verson for a great looking newsletter, issue after issue. Vernon is going to be a tough act to follow.

Since I don't have access to a good DTP program, the format and look of the newsletter is going to change. I will put emphasis on content over good looks. I will also make the greatest effort to get the newsletter out on time.

On that note, we are still on the look out for articles. We need articles badly. If you don't submit articles, it means that I have to write something to fill in the space. I know you don't want to listen to my ramblings, so, send articles. A user group is a participatory group. Participate by writting an article. See your name in print in a "national" publication (Hey, we mail to people across the country).

Being a programmer, I'd like to see articles on other languages available on Sinclair computers. I know the QL has Pascal, C, Forth, Fortran, BCPL, and Lisp available for it. Forth, C, and Lisp are available from the Quanta Library.

Since I use my QL mostly (my T/S 1000 is shelved and my T/S 2068 has a bad ULA chip), all the articles that I write will be QL slanted. I am depending on others to write articles for the other Sinclair computers.

(For those that don't know, I have other computers besides Sinclairs. I collect all kinds, they now total 22).

With the new newsletter format,

# **SNUG Update**

*By Dave Bennett*

A few months ago I was asked to be the SNUG Liaison by our new President, Ruth Fegley. I agreed to this.

SNUG has made tremendous strides since the last SNUG meeting at the Capitol Fest.

SNUG has started publishing a newsletter. So far there have been two newsletters released. Frank Davis, Paul Holmgren, and Basil Wentworth took advantage of their geographical nearness (Indiana) and offered to be an editorial board.

There was an interesting idea in the second newsletter. That is that the various Users Groups would prepare their newsletter material, forward it to SNUG who then would prepare a final piece, collate it, print it up and then mail it to the membership. It was decided at the CATS meeting not to take SNUG up on this offer and continue to publish the CATS Newsletter as we have been.

Also in this newsletter is an item about the SNUG BBS. It is a sub board of the system used by the Chicago group. Call 1-708-576-7072 set at 8,1,even. No baud rate is given. It is available 24 hours. At the ">" prompt type LOGIN SNUG (ENTER), at the password prompt type GUEST (ENTER). This system is set up to be especially useful for those still using the 2068 and MTerm but any other setup will work out.

All the national publications except for UPDATE have disappeared. Some have even taken your hard earned money with them. Bill Jones the publisher of UPDATE was getting a bit burned out. He offered the magazine to SNUG.

Although SNUG plans to continue its own newsletter, Carol and Frank Davis will continue UPDATE after the July issue. All renewals and new subscriptions will go to UPDATE Computer Systems, P.O. Box 1095, Peru IN 46970.

SNUG also has a Public Domain library for most of the Timex and Sinclair machines with the exception of the ZX80. They may even get contributions for it too.

2068 software is available on cassette or on floppy disk. Right now they only support Oliger format although they expect to have Larken format by the time you read this. If someone buys the tape versions and wants to convert them to AERCO or Zebra that is OK. SNUG does not have the equipment yet.

There are only tapes available for the ZX81, TS 1000 and TS 1500.

QL programs are on disks or on preformatted MDVs that you supply.

Z88 software is available on disk. They are not offering eproms due to the cost involved. I sent the Z88 software to SNUG. You will need a terminal program with Xmodem to transfer the files from your desktop machine. A Z88 terminal program is included on the disk. You will also need an RS232 cable from your desktop machine to the Z88. There is a file with pinouts on the disk.

Disk sizes supported are: 5-1/4" 40 and 80 track, 3-1/2" 80 track SSDD and DSDD. These are available for the TS2068, QL and Z88.

The prices for SNUG members are: tapes = \$4.00 each. 5-1/4" disks = \$3.00 each and 3-1/2" disks = \$4.00 each. Non SNUG members add a dollar to each item. Prices include postage and handling. All orders should be

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sent to: SNUG Library, 513 East Main St., Peru, IN 46970. Personal checks, money orders and bank drafts are okay at this time. Sorry no charge cards or C.O.D.'s. Inquiries about the Library will be answered if you include a SASE or call 1-317-473-8031 from 6-9 PM Central as long as they are not collect.

For a complete listing of what's in a particular part (or all) of the library, please send \$2.00 to cover photo-copying and postage. As a bonus, this \$2.00 will be applied to your first order from the library.

To join SNUG send \$12.00 to:

Paul Holmgren  
5231 Wilton Wood Ct.  
Indianapolis, IN 46254

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## That's 30:

### Newsletter Editor Resigns

*By Vernon Smith*

To the Members of CATS:

In the media "That's 30," says that the task at hand is finished. And so it is 30 for me as Editor of the newsletter. It has been very interesting for me and I've learned a lot in the preparation of the last 32 issues. I do however think that the membership deserves an explanation for my departure. Tim Swenson wanted to publish the two letters I wrote to Ruth concerning my decision to step down, but I asked him to let me write it as an article instead. You know me, always ready to step up on the soap box. I shall, however, try to make it shorter than usual.

It seems like just yesterday (it was really July, 1987) that I drove to John Riley's house in Severn to learn how to put the newsletter together. In those days, the operation was literally "cut and paste"! John and I spent two hours or so getting the August issue together and this was the sum total of my OJT. John had just started to experiment with the first version of Digital Precision's dtp program, so I took up the challenge and began to learn all the ins and outs of the program. It and version 2 had many shortcomings but they were better than any other dtp program offered for the QL. In mid 1988, my dtp requirements had changed. I now needed a program that stored an entire issue in the computer, could import externally generated text files, had decent looking graphics and text output, and could be printed easily on a 24-pin printer. The QL programs could do none of these; however, I found all these in various Atari offerings and I proceeded to switch publication from the QL to the Atari.

On a personal note, mastery of the various dtp programs on the QL and Atari took a great deal of time. Time is a commodity we all have too little of and, in my case, I found that mine was gained at the expense of my family.

Over the last 32 issues, I've tried to upgrade the look of the newsletter and standardize the format. I think that I've accomplished this. In the beginning, I felt that a Sinclair users group should publish its newsletter using Sinclair dtp programs but when we placed second to a users group that published theirs on an IBM program, I figured what the heck. Over the last year or so I have become more interested in the production end of the newsletter than the content. Writing editorials every month and, in many issues, my own opinion column, as well, got to be a chore rather than something I looked forward to doing. The constant need to plead for articles to fill each issue took its toll as well. I said very early in my tenure, that I wouldn't act as a Sinclair clipping service; so several issues have been shortened due to a lack of articles. To all of the members that wrote articles, thank you. To those yet to take pen in hand, please support Tim. Each issue requires nearly 8 1/2 typeset pages. That's a lot of copy.

In my resignation letter to Ruth, I volunteered to continue as publisher, if someone else would assume the duties of Editor and be responsible for assembling the articles. Tim Swenson has volunteered to be the new Editor and he has a plan that should allow him to edit and publish the issues in a timely fashion. He wants to have total control of both the content and format, and I think that is an excellent idea. This should also insure a more timely publication, which is important for meeting notices and other time sensitive matters. I will always be available to lend a hand if needed.

Again, I want to thank all the contributors during the last 3 years. I've learned a great deal and I want to thank you for my education. Though I am no longer the Editor, my association with CATS will continue to be as strong as ever.

# The C Column

*By Tim Swenson*

Last month we looked at a simple program. This month we will look at how to do input and output in C.

C has no built in input or output commands. Functions are called that perform input and output. Last month we used the function printf. This month we will use the function getchar. Getchar gets one character from the standard input channel, the keyboard. The input from getchar is assigned to an integer variable.

The opposite function is putchar. Putchar puts one character to the standard output channel, the screen. Putchar takes in a single integer variable.

Take a look at program number 2. The program gets a character from the keyboard, then while the character is not a lower case q, the character is put to the screen and another character is read in.

This program takes characters entered from the keyboard and echos them to the screen. Getchar does not echo any characters by itself.

Any assignment can be used within an expression. Look at program number 3. With the assignment statement inside the logic of the while statement, one extra line can be left out. The assignment will be executed before the evaluation on it is performed. This shows you how C can become more compact (and more unreadable).

Since we are on the subject of input/output, let's take a look at string input/output. C does not have a string type. You have to use an array of characters. Since there are no string types, there are no string manipulation commands. Instead there are functions to do this.

Look at program number 4. The variable string is defined as an array of 20 characters. Now a call is made to the function gets. Gets is short for "get string." This function gets a string from the standard input and assigns it to the variable string.

Now in the while statement a comparison is made to see if the string is of length 0. Strlen is a function that will return the length of the string. If the length is greater than 0, the string is sent to the standard output with puts (put string) and another string is inputted.

A lot of necessary functions are included in the standard C library. Most commands in basic have an equal C function. Plus you may write your own functions and add them to the library. There has always been a problem that not all C libraries are equal and some programs may not be ported from compiler to compiler.

Next month we will look at how C handles files.

```
/* Program 2 */
#include <stdio_h>
```

```
main()
{
    int c;

    c = getchar();
    while ( c != 'q' ) {
        putchar(c);
        c = getchar();
    }
}
```

```
/* Program 3 */
#include <stdio_h>
```

```
main()
{
    int c;
    while((c=getchar())!='q') {
        putchar(c);
    }
}
```

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## From Page 2

we have a new submission policy. Submissions can be made in the following formats: QL (40/80 track, microdrive), IBM (360K - ASCII, DIF, or DCA), or hardcopy. The text format is 3.5" wide (35 columns) right justified. Authors can load thier articles on the CATS BBS. For speed send the articles to my home address listed at the end of this article.

This issue is a little thin, but I needed a few articles for the next issue. Since I will be out of town during the time that I would normally spend working on the newsletter, I will be working on getting it finished before I go to California (read Ruth's column for the details).

Since I work with computers at work and at home, I read alot of different computer journals. Occasionally I run across an article that Sinclair users might enjoy. The latest was in the March 5th issue of Infoworld. In a column by Jerry Pournelle, Mr. Pournelle talks about his use of the Z88 while bedridden. He even mentions that fellow Science Fiction writer Arthur C. Clarke takes at least one Z88 every where he goes. The whole articles talks about the Z88 being British and hence wierd, but otherwise a very good computer.

Well, that ends my ramblings. I hope you like the newsletter. I look forward to working on many more (Pleeeaaase don't make me write all of the articles!). See you at the July meeting, I will miss the June meeting.

Timothy C. Swenson  
4703 W. Braddock #104  
Alexandria, VA 22311

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```
/* Prog 4 */
#include <stdio_h>

main()
{
    char string[20];

    gets(string);

    while(strlen(string)!=0) {
        puts(string);
        gets(string);
    }
}
```

## The T/S 1000 Library

Ted Osheroff, our T/S 1000 Tape Librarian, gave me a copy of a listing of T/S 1000 programs in the library. It's been a while since there was a listing in the Newsletter of what's available in the Library. I though I'd list a few of the more interesting programs.

Money Grabber - Fast moving maze game.

ZX Stock Exchange - Financial game.

Grabos - Two players fight for territory.

Spider - Three part maze.

Towers of Hanoi - Old AI program.

Centrapoid - Exellent maze.

Binary Character Builder - Build 8X8 graphic char.

Flatman - Excellent maze.

Smaug - Adventure with maze.

Space - Star Trek-like game.

Prism - Fine 3-D polygram graphic.

Cave - Another maze.

Puzzle - Word Search.

BJ - Blackjack.

Tape Label - Prints cassette index labels on TS 2040.

# Minix on the QL

*By Tim Swenson*

MINIX is a Unix-like operating system written by Andy Tanenbaum for teaching operating system classes. Minix has been ported to a number of computer systems, the QL being the the most recent on the list.

Since Minix is like Unix, users can learn about Unix from various levels. Users can become familiar with the operating system at the user level or at any deeper level. Users can understand the various parts of Unix, from the filing system to the scheduling system. One can also use UUCP (Unix to Unix Copy Program) to automatically send mail and files to other Unix systems. The only limit is on the memory and speed of the QL.

The original port was done by Felix Croes. He ported the Minix code to the QL from an Atari ST (600x0 also). Since his initial effort Felix has passed on the torch to Erwin Dondorp and Jeremy Allison. Erwin is doing most of the porting. Erwin is waiting to recieve the most recent version of Minix (1.5.3) before continuing his progress.

Since Minix is copyrighted and distributed by Prentice-Hall (the book people) no one can distribute the QL source or executable code. I sent a message to Andy Tanenbaum and asked him if we (the QL community) could have a special liscense for distributing Minix. Andy suggested that PH might consider distributing Minix through their UK office. I said that sounded fine, but that US users also need to have a way of getting the program. The last I heard was that Andy faxed my last comment to PH.

So now we sit and wait to see what happens. I will keep a look out for any new news. I originally

found out about the port from USENET. USENET is sort of a message board that runs across the Internet (a world wide network with parts being Arpanet, Defence Data Network, etc) and hosts that have mail connections to the network. Here is the e-mail addresses of those persons involved.

Felix Croes

croes@fwi.uva.nl

Erwin Dondorp

dondorp@fwi.uva.nl

Jeremy Allison

JRA@GEC2.PHYSICS.MANCHESTER.AC.UK

Tim Swenson

tswenson@dgis.dtic.dla.mil

Bye the Way (BTW), there are a few QL users that have Internet access. I just recently found two of them in the club. The two now need to learn how to use USENET. There is an effort to bring all QLer's on the net together via a mailing list. I'll keep everyone posted.

## User's Query

User's Query is a forum for users to find help with their problems or answers to their questions. A User Groups greatest strength is its knowledge base.

I have a program called "FAST-WORD" for the T/S 1000, which allows sideways printing on the T/S 2040 printer. My copy of the 64K version will not load. I would like to find a loadable copy of the 64K version.

Cliff Watson

600 West Dr.

Glen Burnie, MD 21061

(301) 761-2843



CATS maintains a gratis exchange of newsletters with approximately 30 Users Groups across the U.S. and Canada. Groups not sending a newsletter to us for six months are automatically taken off the list.

CATS BBS: (301) 588-0579. 8-N-1. 300/1200 baud. News and general information, 24 hours a day.

QZX BBS: (505) 522-7081 FIDO net 15, node 6, East Coast dial (703) 547-4815 FIDO net 18, node 9.

Time SIG on CompuServe: Wednesday night, 10:00 PM Eastern time (GO CLUB).  
 Networks  
 Memberships cost \$15 per year, are good for 12 months, and include all privileges (access to libraries, group buys, etc.). A newsletter only subscription is available for persons living outside the Washington Metro area and is \$12 per year.

Meetings  
 Monthly meetings are held from 11:00 AM to 4:30 PM, on the second Saturday of each month, at the New Carrollton Public Library.  
 Newsletter

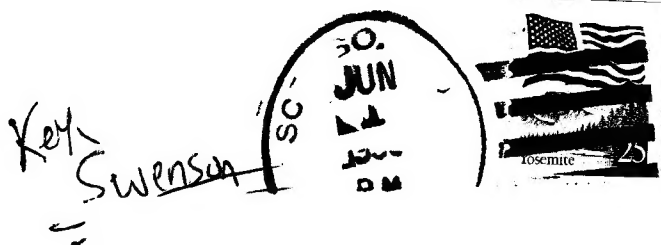
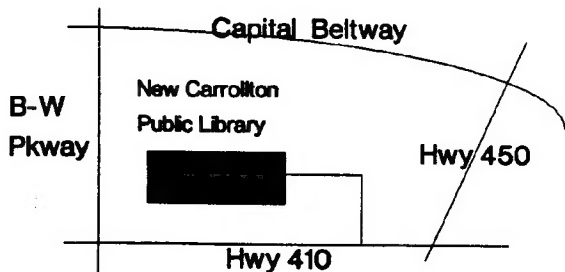
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### Executive Board

The Capital Area Timex/Sinclair Users Group is a not-for-profit group devoted to serving the interests of those who own, use, or are interested in the Timex/Sinclair family of computers.

## FIRST CLASS MAIL

CATS Newsletter  
 P.O. Box 11017  
 Takoma Park, MD 20913



The next meeting of CATS will be held on:

*Sat. June 9, 1990* 11:00 AM Hardware Workshop  
 2:00 PM General Meeting

At: New Carrollton Public Library 7414 Riverdale Road (Hwy 410), New Carrollton, MD

**IF YOU ARE NOT A MEMBER OF CATS. THIS IS THE ONLY ISSUE YOU WILL RECEIVE**

**PLEASE NOTE OUR NEW ADDRESS**